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THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND.

BY SIR CLEMENT KINLOCH-COOKE, M.P.

From persons in high places much is expected, much is required, and the higher the position the greater are the expectations, the greater are the requirements. Training and ability will affect much, but without aptitude and character little can be accomplished, no lasting impression remains. On the other hand, the combination of these qualities, especially if embodied in a personality attractive and sympathetic, affords the best assurance that the greatest expectations will be realized, the most exacting requirements fulfilled.

This combination and this personality are found in Queen Mary. In addition to receiving a most careful training and being richly endowed with ability, she possesses rare natural gifts and remarkable strength of character. Intensely human, she is eminently practical while entertaining a true and just appreciation of those lofty ideals which make for happiness and insure success. To these sterling qualities, as well as to the Queen's grasp of mind and sound common sense, the King gave public acknowledgment in the first speech he made after his accession, when, having expressed his intention to follow closely in the footsteps of his illustrious father, he added, "And I am encouraged by the knowledge that I have in my dear wife a constant helpmate in every endeavor for our people's good." These words symbolize very clearly the part that the Queen fills in the daily life of His Majesty, how she not only shares his joys and his sorrows, but assists in the more active duties of Kingship in helping to carry out the many and great responsibilities which directly and indirectly beset the path of every occupant of the British throne.

For the daughter of an English Princess, first cousin to the reigning Sovereign, the Queen's bringing-up was very

simple. The marriage of her parents had been a love match, and if there was no great wealth on either side it is interesting to recall that the Duchess of Cambridge was greatly pleased with her daughter's choice; and in a letter written shortly before the wedding she expresses the opinion that "Francis is a most excellent young man, good principled, most religious, perfect manners: in short, I consider Mary most fortunate to find such a husband." Before taking possession of the apartment at Kensington Palace, lent them by Queen Victoria and the same that she herself occupied when living with her mother the Duchess of Kent, the newly married couple stayed for a few months at Lady Marion Alford's house in Prince's Gate. Writing soon after their arrival to Mrs. Dalrymple, a much-valued friend of her girlhood, the Princess says: "We are beginning life on our own account, having just completed our small establishment. It is a great interest and amusement to us both, and you would laugh could you hear me giving my orders *en bonne maîtresse de maison!* . . . I am finishing this letter after dinner in Francis's sitting-room, while he is amusing himself at the piano. I mention this to give you an idea of our tête-à-tête evenings, which are very cosy in the Darby and Joan fashion."

It was into this homely atmosphere that Queen Mary was born at Kensington Palace on May 26th, 1867, and although at her baptism she received the names Victoria, Mary, Augusta, Louisa, Olga, Pauline, Claudine, Agnes, up to the time of her marriage she was always known and spoken of as Princess "May." "A dear, fat, rosy, pretty child" was the verdict of a lady who saw the royal infant not long after the auspicious event; and writing to a very dear friend, the royal mother says: "May is as sweet and engaging a child as you can wish to see, full of life and fun and as playful as a kitten: with the deepest blue eyes imaginable, quantities of fair hair, a tiny rosebud of a mouth, a lovely complexion (pink and white), and a most perfect figure! In a word, a model of a baby! She wins all hearts by her bright face and smile and pretty endearing ways, and is wonderfully forward for her age. I short-coated her late in the autumn, and she looks a perfect picture in her frocks, pinafores and sashes."

Two years later Queen Victoria offered White Lodge to the Duke and Duchess of Teck as a country home. The

offer was gladly accepted and thither the small family was transported for the summer months. "Dear little May," writes the Duchess, "grows every day more of a companion and is as clever and bright a child as possible for her age, just three and a half." The royal mother was often in and out of the nursery, accompanied her children in their walks, joined in their games, sat down with them at their meals, and had them with her as much as possible. Alluding to the happy home life at White Lodge in these early years, a frequent visitor remarked: "It was a pretty sight to see the fond parents with their young family at tea-time under the old apple-tree in the garden." The Duchess was always glad that her children should enjoy themselves, but careful to avoid any interference with their studies, and was firmly resolved that her daughter's childhood should be absolutely free from gayeties and excitement. "A child," she said, "has quite enough to do to learn obedience and attend to her lessons and to grow without many parties and late hours, which take the freshness of childhood away and the brightness and beauty from girlhood—and then children become intolerable. There are too many grown-up children in the present day."

The royal mother was ever careful to see that her children should thoroughly understand the Bible, and when in residence at Kensington the Chaplain at the Palace and later the Vicar, now Bishop of Peterborough, used to give the Queen and her brothers Scripture lessons. He came twice a week, when the Duchess, who was always present herself, assembled her little family in the schoolroom; and in order that the children might more fully realize the needs of others she often asked him to take them with him to visit the poor in their own homes. Thus quite early in life the Queen was brought into personal contact with poverty. At White Lodge, where the church was some little distance from the house, if prevented from attending divine service by illness or stress of weather, the Duchess gathered her family around her and read them a portion of the Church service and the lessons for the day, adding in an impressive manner a few words of explanation. Although Sunday was a day of rest, the royal mother did not desire her children to spend a dull day, and amusements were never discounted provided they did not interfere with the appointed duties of the Sabbath.

As the natural sequence of this upbringing the Queen has deep religious feelings and convictions; she is a thoroughly devoted church-woman without any predilections towards extreme Anglican views; but while very Protestant in her ideas, as becomes her bringing-up, she in no way opposes ceremony, provided the service is conducted in accordance with the teaching of the Church of England; but if she has a preference, it is for a service in which all the congregation can join, believing that true devotion is better shown in hearty prayer and praise than in excessive ritual. Both she and the King are most regular attendants at church, and the elder children when at home accompany their royal parents, all the family joining heartily in the responses and in the singing of the hymns. The Queen's views regarding the observance of Sunday are the same as those of her mother.

If any poor person in the neighborhood of White Lodge fell ill and needed help Queen Mary and her mother at once went to their assistance, nourishing food was supplied, and frequent visits were paid to the home. In fact, everything was done to alleviate suffering and to cheer the lot of the helpless and the needy. A kindly word, a posy of flowers placed in the hands of a sick person, a toy given to a small boy or girl, a present of clothes, blankets for the winter months, were daily occurrences; and many a poor woman and child for miles round possessed a "hug-me-tight" or some other warm wrap knitted by the royal ladies themselves. These small acts of kindness, unostentatious as they always were, made a lasting impression and awakened feelings of deepest affection and respect in the surrounding villages for the Duchess and her warm-hearted daughter.

When the Queen was sixteen years of age her parents gave up their apartment in Kensington Palace and with their family went to reside at the Villa I Cedri in Florence. The stay there was utilized for educational purposes, and while the Queen studied art and made herself proficient in the Italian language at the same time she was going through the ordinary schoolroom routine. After two years spent in this way, the family returned to White Lodge and the Queen made her first appearance in London society. Soon afterwards she was confirmed, and the Bishop of Peterborough, who prepared her, was much impressed by the deep religious feelings she evinced during his course of instruc-

tion. The time passed abroad had done much to extend her ideas. She had become more self-reliant and her many natural gifts began to show themselves in her daily life and occupations. She entered heart and soul into her mother's charitable work, relieving her of much correspondence, and quickly became her right hand in everything.

The Queen's betrothal to the Duke of York, as the King was then styled, gave universal satisfaction. Everywhere throughout the Empire it was recognized that an English Princess, born and brought up in an English home and possessing all the virtues and attributes that inspire confidence and win affection, was the ideal bride for the eldest son of the heir apparent. On the day of the wedding the crowd was immense, and the mighty cheering of the populace that thronged every available point of vantage along the route gave abundant proof that the daughter of the "People's Princess," as the Duchess of Teck was affectionately called, had found a place deep down in the heart of the nation. That the Queen's married life has more than fulfilled all expectations needs no demonstration. The education and daily occupations of the royal children are under the direct supervision of Their Majesties, and they are frequently with them during the day. The King joins with his sons in their amusements and sports and closely concerns himself with their school-work, while the Queen personally superintends the education of her daughter and that of the younger Princes. The simple home life, the well-regulated studies, the put-by toys in a special cupboard for the little hospital children, and the hour set apart for work for the same cause all tell of the royal mother's desire to bring up her children in the way they should go.

By nature the Queen is most genial and absolutely without affectation. The homely ways of Their Majesties delighted every one in the colonies, and wherever they stayed they were invariably spoken of as the most delightful guests. The geniality of the Queen at once put all the ladies at their ease, and the natural timidity of one up-country hostess at receiving her august visitors soon disappeared when the Queen asked to be taken to the nursery to see the children and then in her charming way invited her hostess to come to her own room "to see our children's portraits." On another occasion during the same journey an old lady, the wife of a clergyman living in an up-country district, was

presented to the royal visitors. The old lady was very nervous. Seeing this, the Queen at once stepped forward and, extending both hands, grasped those of the old lady.

The Queen has a very retentive memory. Once she has mastered a subject, it seldom goes out of her mind, and months afterwards she will astonish her friends by reference to a conversation they themselves had forgotten. When visiting a place for the second time she constantly recalls incidents about the former visit, the people, the houses in the neighborhood, and especially the humbler folk. Soon after arriving at Balmoral this summer she motored over to Abergeldie with Princess Mary to visit several old servants, and remained some time chatting with them in a homely manner. In fact, no place, no person is ever forgotten by the Queen. Even the names of people she has not seen for years come back to her in quite a remarkable way, and very often she remembers the circumstances under which she first met them. For instance, driving through the streets of Hobart, she recognized a man in the crowd and remarked to her lady-in-waiting that he had been a curate at East Sheen when she was a girl, that his name began with C, and that she had heard him preach two or three times. On inquiry it turned out that he was the same man and that his name was C——n. It would be clever to have remembered him had the Queen met him after an interval of ten years, but in a passing crowd in far-away Tasmania it was extraordinary. As a natural result of such a good memory the Queen has something to say to every one, and the personal touch this gift imparts to her conversation gratifies and charms all with whom she is brought into contact.

Music had a great share in the home life at White Lodge, the musical hour in the drawing-room being at one time a regular institution, and often the Duchess would sit down at the piano in the evenings and sing ballads and songs from the popular operettas of the day. The Queen has a sweet voice, a soft soprano, which greatly matured under the skilful guidance of Signor (now Sir Paulo) Tosti. Of late years, however, Her Majesty has given up her singing; and, although retaining her fondness for music, she rarely finds much time to devote to the piano. She is a good judge of a picture and an excellent critic, and whilst at Florence made several pretty sketches of landscape scenery. She rarely misses any good exhibition of pictures in London,

is particularly fond of the Old Masters, and prefers the more finished style of painting to the Impressionist School. Her own collection of water-colors is noticeable for its refined brightness of color and atmosphere; it contains many pretty garden scenes, and some of the groups of flowers are particularly beautiful. Dramatic art of every kind appeals to her, and there are few plays of importance or that have attracted public attention during the last two decades she has not seen. Like her mother, she quickly seizes upon the humorous side of a question. Thus she has a keen appreciation for a sparkling comedy or a farce, and on returning from the theatre or afterwards in conversation often makes allusion to some particularly amusing part of the performance.

The Queen is greatly attached to the historical past of her country and has collected together quite a number of interesting things connected with the royal family. As a girl she always enjoyed going over museums and inspecting articles of antiquity, a trait in her character which has widened with years. She has an intimate knowledge of old silver and china and possesses a valuable collection of *objets d'art*. Ancient monuments of every kind have a fascination for her, and her acquaintance with different kinds of architecture must have entailed much study and close observance. She is particularly fond of visiting cathedrals and knows the interiors of most of the old city churches, besides being well versed in the countless treasures contained in the other historic buildings of our great metropolis. Whenever Her Majesty has a spare afternoon she will often spend it at a museum or picture-gallery. She has her mother's love of England and all things English. A lady, calling at White Lodge one afternoon, remarked upon the comfort of the chair she was sitting upon. "Yes, my dear," said the Duchess of Teck, "British industry; that is why it is such a nice chair." The same story might be told of the Queen. It seems only the other day that she was actively engaged in reviving interest in British silks, and great was the satisfaction expressed by the weavers at the East London silk-mills when they heard that the Queen and her mother were on the premises and actually taking tea "in the master's office." Her wedding-gown was woven in Spitalfields and all her trousseau was of British material. Some years have passed since then, but Queen Mary still retains her keen

interest in the British silk industry and has done much to revive the lace industry in Buckinghamshire, Honiton and Ireland. She only wears articles of British make and manufacture and any artistic production of British labor at once secures her attention.

The Queen has always been a great reader, and her boudoir at White Lodge contained a little case of her favorite books, prominent amongst them being Tennyson's Poems. Books of travel and biographies are seldom missed, for the Queen does not read for mere passing pleasure, but for instruction and information. Thus before starting on her colonial and Indian tours she perused most of the authoritative books on the countries she was about to visit. Maps, too, were studied with care. Frequently during the travels of Their Majesties astonishment was expressed at the accuracy of the Queen's information and her knowledge of local events. Novels of themselves do not appeal to Her Majesty, but she has read and re-read all the classic works of fiction; and any novel by a well-known writer or that is specially recommended to her at once receives her attention. Few ladies have a better or more comprehensive knowledge of English literature than the Queen, while her intimate acquaintance of French and German enables her to keep in touch with the chief works of foreign writers.

Her Majesty follows events attentively. She reads the newspapers daily and as Princess of Wales attended the more important Parliamentary debates, occupying a seat in the Peeresses Gallery in the House of Lords and in the Speaker's Gallery in the House of Commons. She is always ready to listen to the opinions of others, and her pleasure is to meet people who are authorities on current subjects of public interest, to gather their views and then to form her own opinions. Especially is this the case with social questions and matters concerning the care of the sick and the welfare of the poor. A chance meeting in a country house led to my being invited to White Lodge and being honored with the friendship of the Duke and Duchess of Teck. At the time I was helping with the House of Lords inquiry into the sweating system, and well do I remember the great interest taken by the Queen in the evidence. She never tired of hearing about the workers, and would ply me with questions about the chain-makers, the

seamstresses and the other toilers for long hours and low wages, until I thoroughly believe she knew as much about the conditions and requirements of these people as I did myself. She is never satisfied with a mere superficial knowledge of a subject. Details to her are all-important, and it often surprises persons in high office to find how much Her Majesty knows about questions affecting the every-day life of the people. She has great discernment and tact, a sound judgment, a keen insight into character, and a true knowledge of the logical sequence and outcome of events. Few better than the Queen can give sound, practical advice.

Punctuality is a household word in the royal establishment, and when the Queen makes an appointment it is always kept. In business matters Her Majesty is clear and expeditious, methodical and systematic. Her mornings are generally taken up with attending to the voluminous correspondence that arrives by every post. Her secretary and lady-in-waiting submit their letters and the Queen gives instructions concerning them. She quickly grasps the main issue of a question and soon makes up her mind and has never been known to lay aside a matter on the ground that to express an opinion thereon is irksome or difficult; but should any letter require further consideration, it is held over for a day, when a decision is given and almost invariably adhered to. Every consideration is shown to those privileged to serve the Queen, and before signifying her pleasure as to the personal attendance of members of her household Her Majesty will often inquire whether they may not have some other engagement, the breaking of which would be inconvenient to them. Busy though the Queen is—and one who has known her for twenty years has never seen her unoccupied—she is intimately acquainted with and takes part in all that relates to the management of the household. Every servant is known to her, and their comfort is as much a matter of concern to their royal mistress as that of any one else. In fact, no detail of life wearies the Queen, hence the reason that her sympathies are wide and all her days full of work.

In the cause of charity Queen Mary is most generous. She is ever thinking how she can best render help to the poor and to the needy. But large as her heart is, she does not waste her energy or give way to mere sentiment. No letter asking for assistance in any form is ever allowed to

be torn up without full consideration being given to the object, and in every instance a reply is sent. Each case is thoroughly investigated and none but the deserving are ever assisted. In the task of sifting Her Majesty always helps, and long acquaintance with work of this kind enables her quickly to detect the true from the counterfeit. The yearly reports of charitable societies with which the Queen's name is in any way associated are examined by her personally before being placed away for future reference, and she often asks pertinent questions about the management.

A charity in which the Queen takes much personal interest is the Holiday Home for Governesses, founded by herself and which bears her name. Her Majesty frequently motors down into Surrey, where the home is situated, and spends an hour or so talking with the governesses and inquiring into the arrangements made for their comfort. Another charity which owes its origin to the Queen is the Home of Rest for working-women of London, founded as a national memorial to her mother. Herself an industrious worker, the Queen is ever anxious to see proper attention is given to sewing in our schools, and in many and varied ways she has assisted in promoting and encouraging the art of needlework. As Duchess of York she provided the means for building a room at the Village Homes for Little Girls at Addlestone, where the rescued children as they grow up are taught to make their own outfits for service. In the progress of the Needlework Guild, which owes its early success, if not its origin, to the late Duchess of Teck, the Queen has always taken a special interest. For years she assisted her mother in the collection and distribution of the articles, and when the Duchess passed away the Queen herself became the head of the guild. All the parcels are directed to her personally, and year by year it has been her custom to attend at the Imperial Institute and see them unpacked and the articles sorted. In this way thousands of poor people are supplied annually with warm garments for the winter.

The Queen makes crochet woollen garments for poor children at the rate of sixty a year, and on being asked how she could possibly make so large a number replied: "I have always one of the little petticoats on hand in each of my sitting-rooms, and I take it up whenever I have a few spare minutes; then in the evenings my husband reads to me and I work and get through a great deal." Some of these

garments find their way to mothers' meetings and the youngest baby present is the happy possessor of the royal gift, which is usually placed in a glass bookcase or cupboard and shown by the proud mother to admiring friends and neighbors. The father of one of these fortunate babies was unexpectedly driving a carriage in which the King, then Prince of Wales, was seated. On returning home the man said to his wife: "As I was driving His Royal Highness I said to myself: 'Ah, sir, you little know that my wife has a portrait of your wife and a petticoat for our baby of her own making hanging up in our parlor bookcase.'" The royal children are trained by their mother in the same habits of beneficence and self-forgetfulness, and last year Princess Mary sent in to the London section of the Needlework Guild one hundred articles of her own making and collecting.

Broad as are Her Majesty's sympathies, her chief concern is for the welfare of women and children. When visiting a hospital she will tarry long by the bedside of a child, asking the nurse all about the patient, and helping to comfort the little sufferer with kind words and a gift of flowers. As Princess of Wales the Queen would often go to hospitals accompanied only by her lady-in-waiting and quite unexpectedly announce her intention of going round the wards. At other times she would send word to the Vicar of a parish in some poor neighborhood of London inviting him to show her his club-room. As a rule, this kind of expedition was undertaken in the evening when the room was full of people, and frequently Her Majesty passed in and out without being recognized. In this way she learned to know how the poor live and to understand something of the difficulties that surround their daily lives. The Queen has a very exalted idea of what is her duty, but while she never flinches from doing what she considers right, it is always with a certain effort that she visits scenes of acute distress and misery, owing to the pain she herself experiences when seeing others suffer.

A lady who sometimes assists in dispensing the Queen's charitable gifts tells me: "In cases of need amongst poor ladies the Queen has often given monetary help towards a rest and change of air. Every year she allows me to take two pieces of her work to Switzerland; these are raffled in my hotel for the benefit of the very poor Swiss in the village. There is quite a gala time in drawing the raffle

amongst the visitors, who are of all nationalities, and the villages are so grateful to the 'English royal lady.' In connection with orphanages and homes in this country, Her Majesty has for years sent prizes for the best boy and girl in the various places and allows a little badge to be given with them bearing the words, 'Be good and do good.' These badges are worn and very carefully treasured. At Christmas toys from the royal nurseries and money to purchase others come to me and are sent to hospitals and homes and are a great delight to all. But I have to do it all so quietly, as Queen Mary does not like her good deeds to be known."

Her Majesty's whole life speaks of kindly thoughts and kindly deeds; it affords her pleasure to give others pleasure, and wherever she goes she carries with her a radiant personality. The same gracious manner is meted out to every one, high, low, rich or poor. To old friends she is most faithful, and for old retainers most thoughtful, often receiving them and talking with them about the days of long ago. Once a friend of Queen Mary's, always a friend. No wonder she is universally beloved, and the more so by those who know her best.

No Queen of England ever entered upon her queenly estate better qualified to fill that exalted position than Queen Mary. No Queen ever had a greater hold on the affection of the people. Throughout the Empire, among every class, in every clime, the same opinion is expressed—love, respect and admiration for her lofty ideals, high principles, intellectual power, domesticity and family devotion, strong sense of duty, big warm heart, ever-widening sympathy, and, above all, a reverent regard for religion and simple Bible teaching.

CLEMENT KINLOCH-COOKE.